

CHURCH NEWS

FROM THE NORTHERN COUNTRIES

Edited by
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Sigtuna, Sweden

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No. 31

October 24th, 1957.

Joint Northern Radio Services.

On Sunday, October 20th, something new will be tried in the radios of the Northern countries, namely a transmission over all the Northern radio systems of the same church service. This service will be held at the Cathedral of Trondheim, Norway, at which the well-known Bishop Arne Fjellbu will preach. The Danish, Norwegian and Swedish languages are so much alike that people, without much difficulty, understand each other across the frontiers. In Finland, where part of the population speaks Swedish, all the other Northern languages are also understood by large sections of the Finnish-speaking population. The plan is in the future to continue these joint transmissions of church services from the other Northern countries also.

Northern Protests Against Hungarian Death Sentence.

Bishops and clergymen in the Northern countries have protested to the Hungarian Minister of Church Affairs, János Horvath, against the death sentence passed on the Reformed minister, Lajos Gulyas in Györ, and urgently requested that the sentence be quashed. The charge was one of incitement to revolt and instigation to murder during the rising last autumn.

The first protest came from the Danish Clergymen's Association which concluded with the words: "Deeply affected by the severe sentence passed on a fellow-believer who has not carried weapons, and worried about the consequences for international understanding, we appeal to you personally to do your very utmost to have this sentence quashed".

The communication from the Danish bishops is of a similar contents, but also includes an appeal to Dr. Horvath to consider the possibilities for "mitigating the nature of the legal proceedings altogether so that the future contact between East and West is not made unnecessarily difficult".

Later on similar appeals have been sent from other church circles in the Northern countries; amongst others, from the Norwegian Clergymen's Association. In a letter to the Danish bishops Dr. Horvath acknowledges the receipt of the communication and says that he has forwarded the protest to the authorities in charge of the case. In his reply Dr. Horvath does not comment on any of the requests expressed in the letter from the bishops.

DENMARK

Christian-Social Work Centre in Copenhagen.

Last month the Kirkens Korshaer (Church Army), a voluntary organization for Christian social relief work under the Danish Lutheran National Church, opened a new work centre in the St. Nikolai's Church in Copenhagen. The church which is situated in the centre of the city has been erected on the site where the Danish Reformer, Hans Tausen, at one time preached. Since its re-erection the church has not been used as a parish church as there are enough parish churches in the centre of the Capital. During recent years it has been used by the municipal library but now the Kirkens Korshaer has taken over part of the premises. Besides accommodating the head quarters of the organization, the work centre includes rooms for the various activities of the Kirkens Korshaer. As a new undertaking an advisory centre has been established where people may call at any time between 9 o'clock in the morning and 3 o'clock in the night and ask for any kind of assistance and advice.

More than 100 clergymen and laymen have volunteered for this consultative service so that there are always at least two advisers present. During the short time of its existence the advisory centre has proved its worth. Hundreds of people in all walks of life have come - most often anonymously - in order to ask for spiritual guidance and assistance in emergencies of all kinds. Several have also written or telephoned about advice.

At the opening function of the new work centre of the Kirkens Korshaer the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, Mrs. Bodil Koch, and the Bishop of Copenhagen, H. Fuglsang-Damgaard, spoke.

It may be said to be a sign of the times that the Kirkens Korshaer which was originally founded by the Home Mission circles, now has its head quarters in a church. The Kirkens Korshaer no longer is - nor wishes to be - connected with one particular church party, but is a working organ in its special field of service of the whole church.

20 New Churches To Be Erected During the Next Five Years.

During the past few years it has been very difficult to obtain permission for building new churches in Denmark, primarily because the national economy is so severely strained that it is difficult for the Government to meet its legal responsibilities in regard to subsidies to the erection of churches (half of the cost of erection), but now prospects seem to brighten a little. In the near future the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and the Minister of Finance are expected to introduce a Bill in Parliament about a five-year plan for the building of churches which should make it possible to put up four churches a year, i.e. 20 churches in all, half of which are to be built in the ever growing suburban parishes in Copenhagen, and the rest in other parts of the country. It is possible, however, that the Government in an amendment may cut down the present subsidy to one third of the building costs.

Besides building permits for material for putting up four churches belonging to the Lutheran National Church this year, permission

will also be given for the erection of two smaller Baptist churches and one Mormon temple.

The Commission set up by the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs which two years ago investigated the need for churches in the environs of Copenhagen, came to the conclusion that during the first decade 18 churches should be erected in order to meet the most pressing need. It has not been possible as yet to build any of these churches, but now the new five-year plan should make it easier to meet the want for churches in the new housing areas.

News in Brief.

- From May 1st next year the athletics' section of the YMCA and YWCA will open an athletics school for young people from 14-18 years at Hellebjerg in Jutland. The school is expected to be attended also by students from the other Northern countries.
- The deaconess, Sister Minna Nielsen, has been appointed permanent parish assistant in a big Copenhagen parish. She is not to do nursing, but is to be assistant to the vicar in his parish work. A few other big parishes in Denmark have such permanently employed parish assistants.
- The Christian Social Democratic Association in Denmark will work for church services being held both in the radio and throughout the country on May 1st. This has hitherto been the case in only very few places.
- In a few months the Danish Baptist Community will publish a new hymnal which will contain 700 hymns, 361 of which are the same as in the hymnal of the Lutheran National Church.

FINLAND

Attempts at Alleviating the Shortage of Clergymen.

At present 80 clergymen are needed in order to fill all the vacancies in the Lutheran National Church. The need is hardest felt in the northern and eastern dioceses where the parishes are so big that it is difficult for the neighbouring vicars to attend effectively to the vacancies. The Finland-Swedish diocese of Borgå is the one best off, as only four clergymen are wanted there.

These facts are the result of an investigation conducted by a committee set up by the Bishops' Council, partly in order to determine the present and future requirement of clergymen, partly to give suggestions for alleviating the shortage of clergymen. The committee is now trying to find out the number of probable retirements of clergymen to be expected in the next years, and to what extent this decrease may be counteracted by the recruitment of new divinity graduates. This autumn there has been a larger number of young people enrolling for the study of theology than has been the case for some years, i.e. 73 undergraduates, of which 50 are men and 23 women. Ten of the new undergraduates (all men) are Finland-Swedish.

The committee has discovered that no less than 300 male graduates in divinity are employed in other organizations (schools, reli-

gious organizations, etc.) half of which are living in the Capital, and the committee hopes that it may be possible to substitute these men with women graduates or laymen so that they may be set free to take up ecclesiastical posts in the church. The theological faculties are furthermore considering the possibility of establishing a five years' course of theological study instead of the present six years' course, without detrimental effects to the quality of the study, and also the possibility of giving elementary school teachers and other laymen access to ecclesiastical offices following upon a shorter period of theological studies. Finally it is hoped that facilities for obtaining scholarships and loans by divinity students may be improved.

Laymen Must Officiate as Clergymen in Ingermanland.

Only scant information has been received in the Western world during the last few years about the church situation in Ingermanland, the territory between the Neva river and the Peipus lake, North of Leningrad. Ingermanland was originally populated by people closely related to the Finnish people, and belonged to Sweden around year 1700 but is now a part of the Soviet Union. The people of Ingermanland is now supposed to number some 100.000 who are predominantly Lutherans. But only a small percentage of them are still to be found in the old country, the rest having been transferred to other parts of the Soviet Union.

However, a Finn who had the occasion to visit Ingermanland recently told that there are only three elderly clergymen to lead the church work in the district. They all live in Petroskoj and this, of course, results in church life being "faltering and heterogeneous". Members of the congregations are not registered, and the religious literature is extremely scant. But in many places laymen must officiate as clergymen: baptize, administer the Eucharist, marry people and conduct funerals.

The Finnish visitor attended an evangelical festival in the cemetery of Kelto, which was led by the Rev. P. Haimi and the Rev. M. Kukkonen. There is no church in Kelto so people gather in the cemetery where the crosses on the graves may be glimpsed through the trees. A board is placed across two chairs on which the principal speakers of the occasion are seated. Many people are present; among others, the people who have recently returned from Siberia. The joy of reunion is great and so is the joy of being able to gather for worship. The clergymen baptize children and older people, and 10 young people are confirmed and partake in the Lord's Supper at this service. Not before darkness sets in do people disperse after the clergymen have pronounced the blessing over the dead.

Prominent Author Accuses the Church of Negligence.

The chairman of the Finnish Author's Association, Yrjö Soini, in a recent radio lecture strongly accused the lawyers and the church who, he maintains, are responsible for the moral deterioration of the nation. Soini has published one of the most controversial books of recent years, a description of the legal proceedings since 1945 against war criminals, entitled "Sentenced - For What?" In this book he calls the proceedings against those who were the political leaders

during the war a desertion from the proud traditions of justice of former times.

In his radio talk the author painted the present situation in dark colours. He maintained that the faith in legal protection and the sanctity of the law has been shaken and that society no longer finds anything wrong in things which were condemned according to former moral standards, which has led to a serious feeling of distrust and uncertainty. Soini feels this development has taken place especially since 1945 and puts the blame on the church and the lawyers. The Lawyers are accused of not having taken action against those who have proved indifferent to their judicial oath, and the church of not having spoken out unambiguously as is its duty. It has been content with dealing with the personal problems of the individuals instead of taking part in the fight against lawlessness, moral deterioration, and the spreading of the materialistic conception of life. The National Church is asleep, Soini stated, and intimated that the reason for the church having neglected its duty is a fear of coming into conflict with the State with which the church is so closely connected.

The Archbishop of Finland, Ilmari Salomies, in a reply to this attack in one of the newspapers says that the church executes its duties better by confronting the individual person with the Gospel than by publishing statements on topical matters. But, nevertheless, on several occasions the church has spoken its mind to the leaders of the nation and to its fellow-citizens, both earnestly and clearly. The Archbishop further emphasizes that the church is not only the clergy but equally much the laity, and that the voice of the church may be heard through the statements of laymen, to a certain extent also in Soini's call to attention. The Archbishop says that it has been heartening and encouraging to witness the concern and affection for the nation as expressed in Soini's efforts to lift up the nation from its state of degradation.

News in Brief.

- Two church leaders from abroad recently visited Finland, namely the President of the Lutheran Church in Japan, Dr. Chitose Kisti, and the Hungarian Lutheran Bishop, Zoltan Turoczy. The latter has been in Finland four times previously.
- Last month the city theatre in Turku (Åbo) presented Hugo von Hofmannsthal's play "Everyman" on the Cathedral steps. The performance was an expression of the desire for a close relationship between church and theatre.
- Professor Paavo Ravita gave the address at the unveiling ceremony in Hamina (Fredrikshamn) in September of a monument in memory of officers killed in the war. The speech was described by the Communistic press in Finland as a piece of "old propaganda inciting to war". The monument is a sculpture by the son of the late President Kyösti Kallio, Kalervo Kallio.

ICELAND

Dedication of New Church.

The new church in Saurbaer, North of Reykjavik, where the famous loprous hymn composer, Hallgrímur Pjetursson (1614-1674), was a vicar, has now been dedicated in the presence of the Presidential couple. The President of Iceland, Ásgaðir Ásgeirsson, is himself a graduate in divinity and his wife is the daughter of the late Bishop Bjarnarson. The 89 years old Fridrik Friðriksson, D.D., also took part in the dedication service. As a young man Dr. Fridriksson founded the YMCA in Reykjavik which, as the first in the world, included a "youngsters' section" for boys below the age of 14.

NORWAY

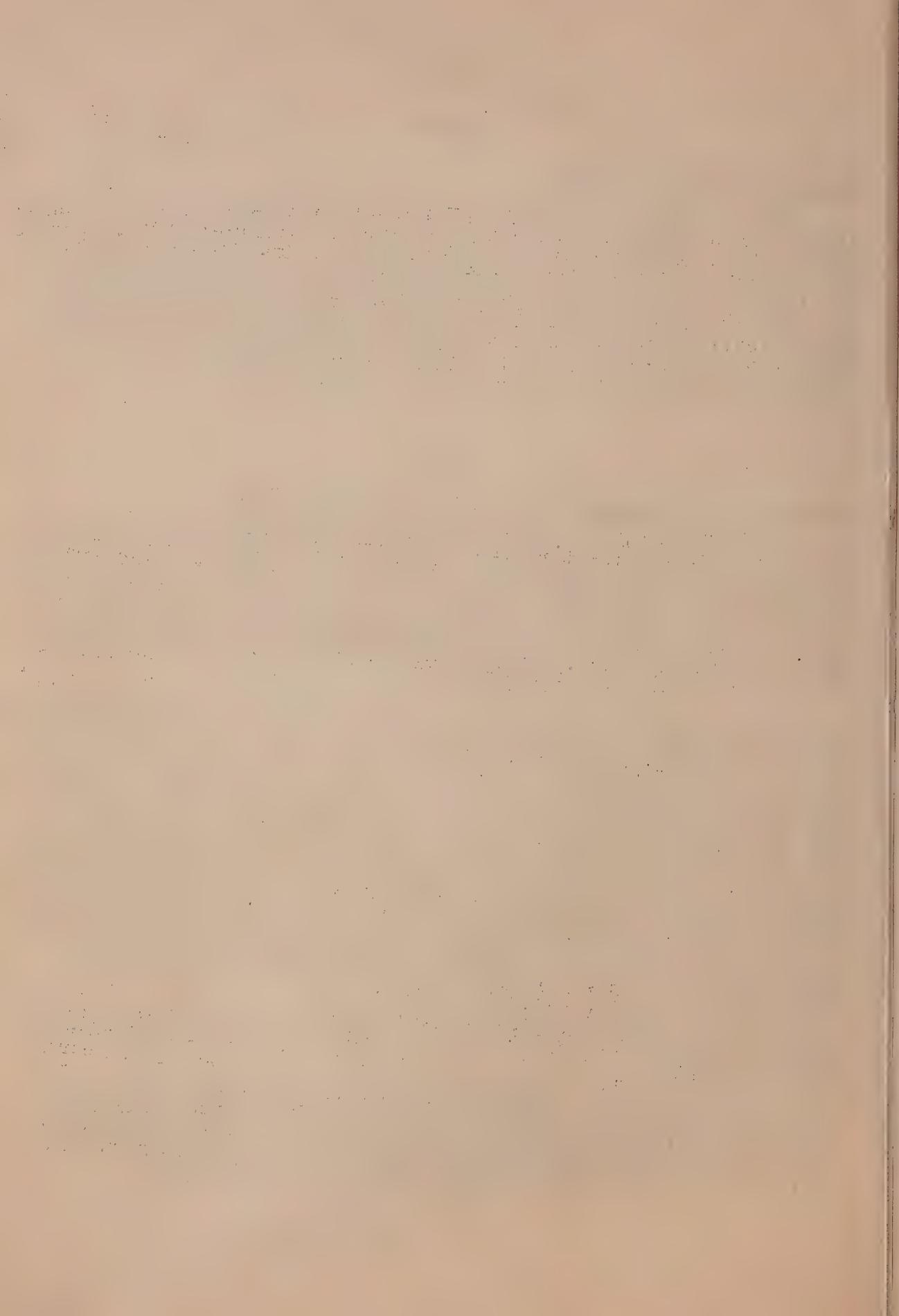
The Church Pays Homage to the Memory of King Haakon.

On September 22nd a memorial and thanksgiving service was held in all the Norwegian churches on the occasion of the death of King Haakon VII on the previous day. The service in the Cathedral of Oslo, at which Dean Thord Godal preached, was attended by the Royal Family, Prime Minister Gerhardsen and other members of the Cabinet, as well as representatives of the civil and military authorities and the Corps Diplomatique. Memorial services were also conducted in the 30 Norwegian seamen's churches in foreign countries.

Bishop Johannes Smemo, Oslo, who was on tour in the United States broke his journey and returned to Norway as soon as he heard about the serious turn in the King's illness and reached home on the same day the King died. He, as well as the other bishops and the entire church press, has paid a warm tribute to the memory of King Haakon. Thus Bishop Smemo, after having mentioned the King's importance to the whole of the Norwegian nation, continued: "According to our Constitution the King is head of the church. This duty King Haakon executed in a very special manner which was in close conformity with his personality. The supreme authority of the church was at the same time the most diligent churchgoer, the most attentive listener, and the most expert audience in regard to appreciating both the contents and the form of the service. He has truly left behind an heritage for the whole of our church".

On the occasion of King Haakon's death the Norwegian Church has received numerous telegrams of condolence from church leaders all over the world.

King Olav V, who immediately took over the Royal Power after his father, has chosen for himself his father's motto: "All for Norway". In his proclamation on accession to the Throne King Olav expressed the wish that God would support him in carrying out his duties so that they might become a blessing to the nation.



Case of Pornography Causes Heated Discussions.

A case before the city court of Oslo in which the author, Agnar Mykle, is charged with pornography by the Public Prosecutor on the occasion of the publishing of his book "Sangen om den røde rubin" (The song of the Red Ruby) has caused an extremely heated debate. From many sides it is maintained that the book is a work of fiction which must exempt it from censure, while others declare that "the Ruby" is nothing but naked pornography which society must remove from circulation in order to protect itself.

Most of the churchpeople asked to give their opinion on the book denounce it as being immoral, harmful, and unwholesome and demand that such books be prohibited. A few others, as for instance the author and critic, Karl Fredrik Engelstad, declare that, although the sex morals of the book are offensive and wrong and its literary value poor, the case nevertheless involves the idea of the freedom of the press for which reason any kind of censure of the book must be banished. On giving evidence before the Court, the Danish literary critic, Jøns Kruse, even went so far as to call it a Christian book, in as much as it is an honest description of man in victory and defeat.

Due to the wide attention given to the matter in the press, the book has achieved a tremendous sale both in Norway and abroad and the author has pocketed an unwarranted large profit.

On October 10th, the sentence was pronounced in the Mykle-process. The author and the publisher were pronounced not guilty. The book, however, was declared immoral and was confiscated.

The Quakers Protest Against Rocket Weapons.

Gathered for their annual meeting the Norwegian Quakers have appealed to Parliament and Government to change their attitude in regard to rocket weapons. The Quakers express their grief and horror at learning that Norway has accepted the offer of rocket weapons for the defence forces. To call rocket weapons "weapons of defence" is to carry the conception of "defence" further than is right and reasonable. And to draw a line of distinction between rockets carrying hydrogen bombs and rockets with ordinary explosive charges only tends to obscure ordinary people's ideas of what it all is about, the statement says.

The Norwegian No to Integration Between World Council of Churches and International Missionary Council Being Debated.

The decision of the Norwegian Missionary Council at the beginning of this summer to refuse its consent to the plans for an integration between the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council is not at all approved of by all the religious circles in Norway. The reason for the Missionary Council's refusal was, predominantly a mistrust of the World Council of Churches which was not considered to have a sufficiently clear dogmatic attitude to fundamental questions. As may be remembered, the Norwegian member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, Bishop Johannes Smemo, at the meeting this summer at New Haven warned against proceeding too rapidly in the matter of integration by referring to the un-enthusias-

tic attitude of the big missionary societies in Norway and their fear of the World Council of Churches developing into a super-church. The Bishop emphasized, however, that he did not himself share this fear.

The weekly "Vår Kirke" which, although published by the Oslo Home Mission, often adopts an independent attitude in topical matters, in a leading article criticized the so-called "Norwegian separatist standpoint". Both from reasons of principle and from practical reasons the integration is advocated, and it is pointed out that no responsible person in the World Council of Churches has any wish to turn the Council into a super-church. Finally it expressed the wish that the Norwegian Church when the World Council of Churches in 1960 at the meeting in Ceylon is to decide on the matter, will be at one with the other Protestant denominations and go in for the integration which is desired also by the churches in the old Norwegian mission fields.

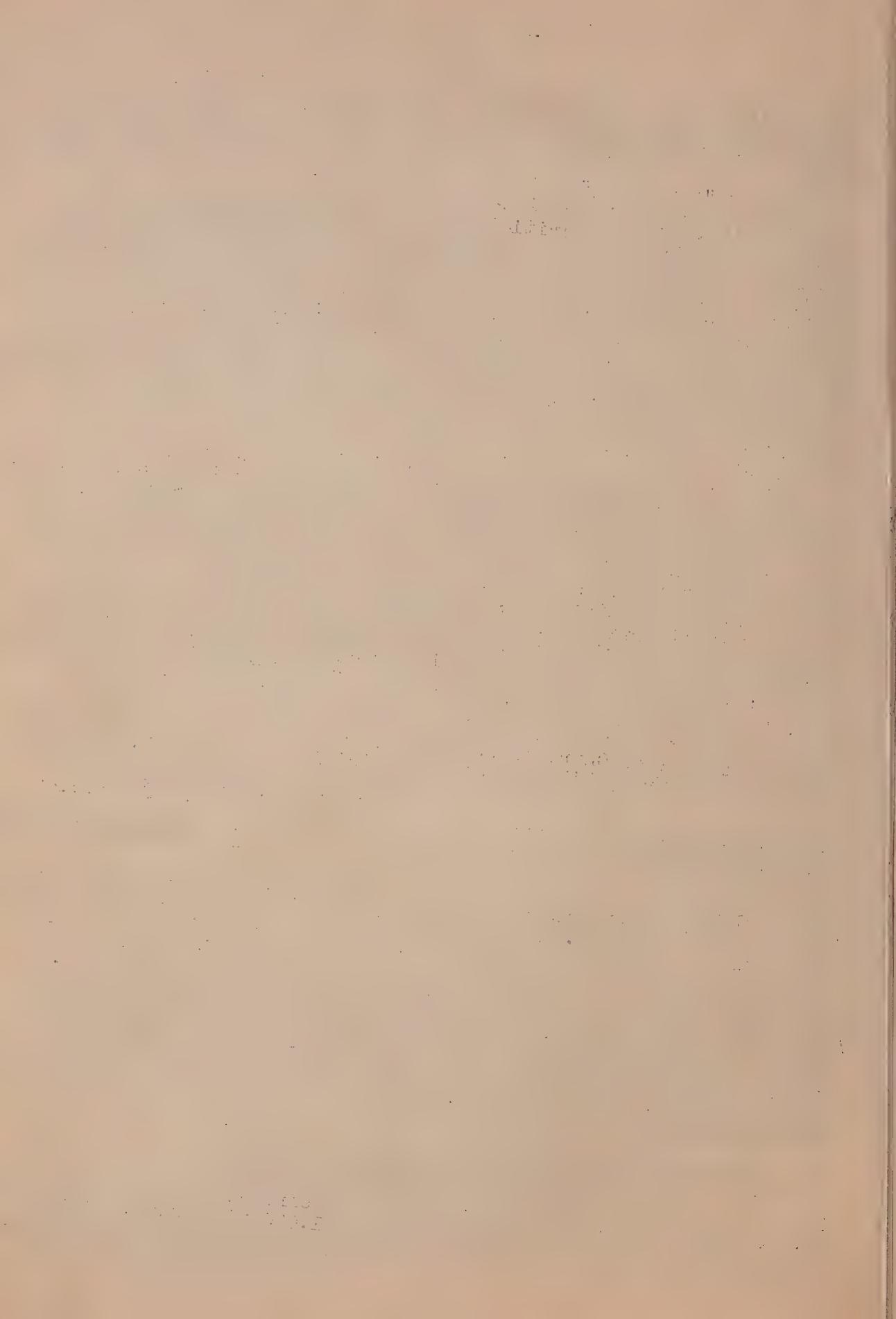
The Christian daily in Bergen "Bergen" which is closely connected with the big voluntary Christian organizations, supports the International Missionary Council in its decision and finds no reason for changing it. In a leading article it says, among other things, that "overlapping" may easily be avoided even though there are two organizations, and that the young churches are free to join the World Council of Churches if they wish to come into direct contact with the Western denominations, but that the Norwegian missionary societies must otherwise possess the authority to represent the Norwegian Church in relation to the churches on the mission field. It is pointed out that it is not only in Norway, but also in Sweden, Finland, Germany and England that opinions are divided on this matter. And, finally, the attitude of the International Missionary Council is described as being faithful to the Gospel, in as much as the World Council of Churches is based on an "extremely ambiguous foundation and strong liberal and Catholicizing tendencies".

Great Interest for the Voluntary Church Conference from October 29th to October 31st.

Norwegian religious circles are looking forward eagerly to the national Voluntary Church Conference which is to take place in Oslo from October 29th - 31st. The meeting is the first one of its kind since the new Church Legislation came into force some years ago. It will comprise 170 members, chosen by the various Diocesan Councils. The conference which has canonical power is arranged by the Voluntary Church Council whose chairman is Bishop Johannes Smemo. At the meeting the Bishop himself will speak on "The Future Voluntary Church Organization" and besides this a number of topical church problems as well will be dealt with. Among other things, the relation between the official church and the voluntary Christian organizations will be discussed.

Evangelical Week of Action in Bergen and Environs.

From October 20th - 27th an evangelical week will be conducted in 37 parishes in Bergen and environs where there are altogether 16.000 inhabitants. The campaign has been carefully planned through prayer meetings and the training of some 1.000 visitors who have



personally called on most of the homes in the district with invitations to meetings and church services. There has also been an extensive information and advertising campaign leading up to the evangelical week. During the week 32 preachers will address audiences in just as many congregational halls.

Correction of Misunderstanding With Respect to Minneapolis Conference.

The new Secretary General of the Norwegian Missionary Council, Fridtjof Birkeli, who was elected member of the Executive Committee of the Lutheran World Federation, has put an end to the misunderstandings about the attitude of the World Conference to the Roman Catholic Church. Press reports gave the impression that a wish for closer contact with Rome had been expressed at the meeting and this had caused very sharp comments in the religious press in Norway (see CN No. 30).

In an interview with the Norwegian Telegraph Bureau Dr. Birkeli says that the press reports are a complete misunderstanding probably due to the decision to establish an institute for the study of confessions which among other things should take up the study of modern Roman Catholicism.

With regard to the devotional services at Minneapolis which were characterized by a great deal of liturgy, a form of service which made a particularly bad impression on many Christians in Norway, Dr. Birkeli said that at its subsequent meeting the Executive Committee had agreed that there had been too much liturgy and that this form would not be repeated at future conferences.

News in Brief.

- In the near future the Norwegian Congregational Institute will open a family advisory centre in Oslo, to be led by the Rev. Albert Assev with the assistance of a voluntary team of clergymen and laymen. Based on the experiences of the advisory centre in Oslo the Congregational Institute plans to open similar centres in other bigger towns.

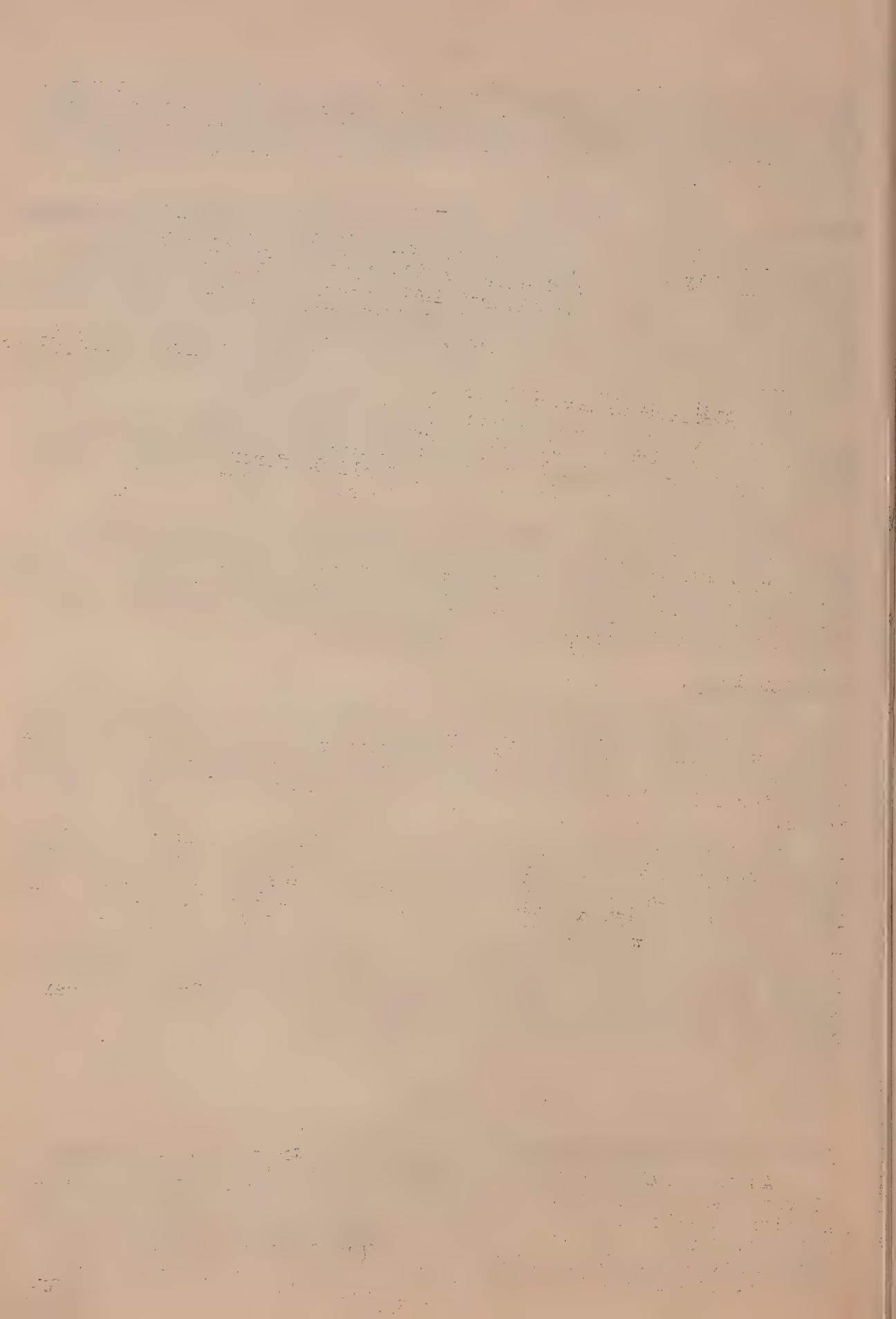
- The Youth Centre established by the YMCA has invited 300 East-German children from refugee camps to a two months' stay in private Norwegian homes. Thus, the number of children from East Germany who have been on such visits to Norway will reach appr. 1.000.

- Last month a young people's assembly was conducted for representatives of youth activities in the diocese of Oslo. The purpose was to co-ordinate the various branches of work among young people and to be a source of mutual inspiration, and it was resolved to make the assembly an annually occurring event.

SWEDEN

The Swedish Church Rejects Women Pastors.

At the beginning of October the Swedish Church Synod, with 62 votes to 36 rejected the proposal of the Swedish Minister of Church Affairs to allow women to take holy orders in the Swedish Lutheran National Church. Of the 43 clerical members of the Synod only one was in favour of the proposal, namely the Pastor Primarius, Olle Nystedt, Stockholm. The Synod includes 57 laymen. Two votes were



not cast. The Synod has the right of veto with respect to church legislation and consequently no women will be allowed to take orders from July 1st, 1958, as was proposed by the Minister of Church Affairs.

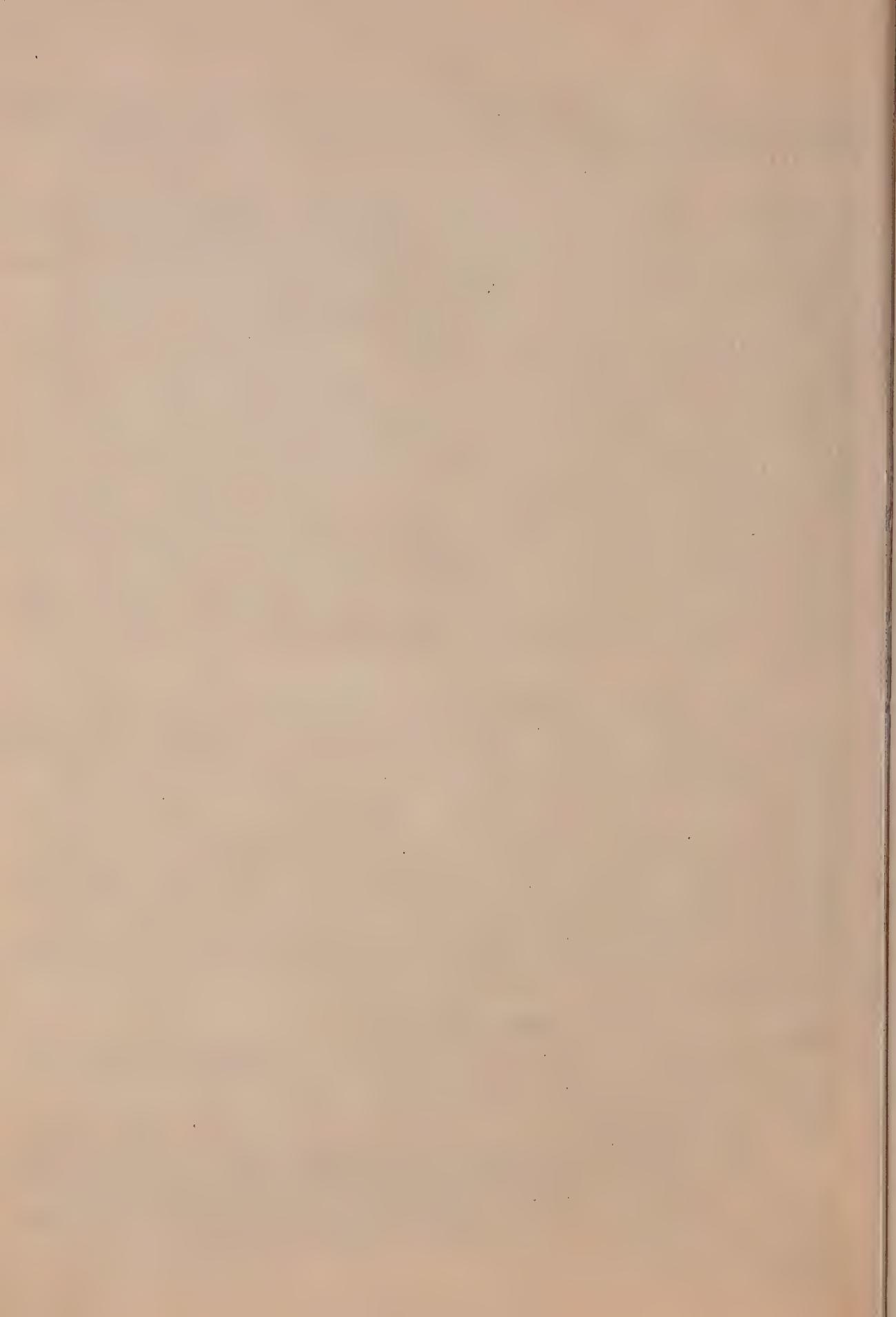
Prior to the ballot a 15 hours' debate had taken place in the Synod and an extensive discussion on the subject been conducted in the sub-committee, consisting of 14 members with Bishop John Cullberg, Västerås, in the chair. In this sub-committee a majority of 10 rejected the proposal while 4 recommended it. Both sides motivated their attitude in detailed statements. Nine of the majority of ten based their rejection on the New Testament, particularly on the views of the Apostle Paul on the nature of women's service in the congregation, and, furthermore, pointed to the division in the church to be feared as a result of allowing women to take holy orders. A fear of disruption in the fellowship between the Anglican and Swedish Churches in matters of ordination was also expressed. In a separate statement Bishop Cullberg said that he must join the majority of the sub-committee - although he did not consider the practical directions of the New Testament for contemporary religious life as binding for our time. Consideration for those who for reasons of conscience feel obliged to oppose women pastors must according to him be of decisive importance. The minority, consisting of laymen exclusively, in its motivation came to the conclusion that the directions in the New Testament about the position of women in the congregation are valid only for that age in history and that the time has now come to permit women to take orders in the church on a par with men, with the stipulation, however, that no bishop should be forced to ordain women against his convictions.

The motivation of the united Synod for rejecting the proposal was not on line with that of the majority of the sub-committee. A new formulation was resolved in its place, proposed by Bishop Helge Ljungberg, Stockholm, in which it says that there are divergencies of opinion as regards the binding power of the directions in the New Testament for religious life in all future. It is, therefore felt that the Synod is not justified in taking a decision which would be binding for future developments until wider agreement and greater clarity as to the nature of the ecclesiastic office has been obtained in the church. In this connection it would be of value to have the question viewed in the light of ecumenical relations: for instance, through the World Council of Churches. (A direct suggestion that the World Council of Churches should work out an extensive statement on the subject of women ministers had appeared shortly before the meeting in an article by Dean Nils Karlström, Skara, in the "Morgon-Bladet").

Notes on the Question. Women Ministers.

Both before and after the decision of the Synod there has been a most lively discussion on the subject. The following brief notes may give an impression of the extent to which the question has agitated the public mind.

In a communication to the Bishops' Conference 26 women theologists have opposed the idea of women pastors while at the same time strongly urging the establishment of an office for women within the church, compatible with the New Testament, which should include spiritual guidance and cure of souls, evangelization, teaching and similar activities.



Thirteen women students of theology at Lund and Uppsala have requested the Synod "not to obstruct God's work by refusing women the right to follow the call of Christ to them to become ministers". Five of them declare that they themselves wish to take holy orders.

A delegation from 70 women organizations, representing more than 800.000 women, in an appeal to the sub-committee of the Synod describes the question of giving women access to the ecclesiastical office as a social matter of the utmost importance. In the opinion of the women organizations a continued opposition might constitute a serious danger to the church.

At a public meeting in Stockholm, arranged by the women organizations, the well-known 69 year old graduate in divinity, Ester Lutteman, announced that she would resign her membership in the Lutheran National Church owing to the attitude of the church towards women pastors. Mrs. Lutteman's late husband was a prominent clergyman and she herself has made an important contribution to the work of the church for which reason her decision has caused both regret and worry.

The former mayor of Jönköping, Oscar Dahlbäck, has suggested the setting up of a Swedish Evangelical Laymen's Association which should stand guard for the spiritual freedom and the heritage of the Reformation against uncritical ritualism, sacramentalism, thraldom of literalism and clerical masculine arrogance.

On being asked about their attitude to the question of women ministers, 75 % of the 3.200 members of the Swedish Clergymen's Association replied to the question. Of these 87% are opposed to the thought, 12 % are in favour, and 1 % do not express themselves clearly.

90 clergymen in Stockholm, or about half of the total number, in a statement declare themselves opposed to the motivation expressed by the majority of the sub-committee, i.e. the reference to the New Testament.

From several quarters it has been criticized that the Synod included only two women, of which the one was opposed to women pastors.

It is known that none of the present Swedish bishops would ordain women even though the majority of the Synod might have approved of the proposal.

The Synod goes in for a Trebling of the Erection of Churches.

The Synod in Stockholm has decided to approach Government about a trebling of the projects for the building of churches in order to meet the present need for churches in the course of 4 - 5 years. At the moment permission is given to build churches to the value of 10 million Sw.Crs. annually but it is requested to increase this sum to 30 million Sw.Crs.

Of other resolutions adopted at the Synod may be mentioned: the approval of a series of texts for sermons from the Old Testament to be worked out for use at morning Sunday services.

The Synod rejected a proposal for giving non-theologians access to ecclesiastical offices without demanding any theological training. Such a general arrangement might result in two classes of clergymen, it is felt, and this is not to be desired.

The Synod supported the suggestion that ministers to seamen and legations in the Northern countries should be allowed, by mutual consent, to perform marriages in the country in which they work.

New Roman Catholic Bishop in Sweden.

The almost 80 years old Roman Catholic bishop, Johannes Erik Müller, who for 34 years has been Head of the Roman Catholic Church in Sweden, has been placed on the retired list from October 1st, and has been succeeded by the Bishop K. Ansgar Nelson, who has done duty in Stockholm for a number of years.

In a farewell interview in the "Morgon-Bladet" Bishop Müller expresses his gratitude for the fellowship with the Christians in Sweden whose tolerance and willingness to sacrifice he admires. He describes the Lutheranism in Sweden as being "moderate" and in connection with a reference to the many Roman Catholic refugees who have arrived in Sweden during recent years and the assistance given them by the Lutherans he declares:

"We have found many friends among the Protestant Christians who have helped us in many ways. The fundamental truth is the same to all of us Christians, and part of this truth is also Christian charity".

Every Fifth Married Couple Applies for Divorce.

Almost every fifth marriage in Sweden, i.e. 18 % is dissolved by divorce. This places Sweden together with Austria and Denmark, at the head of the list of countries in Europe in respect of divorces. The corresponding figure in the USA is 25 %. Half of the divorces in Sweden must be attributed to excessive consumption of alcohol.

These facts were given recently by the barrister at law, Evert Lundgren, Stockholm, who for the past five years has been the leader of a municipal family advisory office.

Gallup Poll on Religious Beliefs.

The Swedish Institute for Investigation of Public Opinion has conducted an investigation concerning people's religious beliefs. From this it appears that 71 % believe in a God who rules the world, 60 % believe that God intervenes in their own personal lives, 53 % believe in a Heaven after death, and 34 % declare that they pray to God regularly. 43 % answer yes to the question whether they believe in the Divinity of Christ, 38 % believe in the Virgin Birth, while only 13 % believe in the doctrine of original sin.

News in Brief.

- The Swedish radio has begun a new series of broadcasts with the title "What Was Said in Church To-day?" On Sunday evenings reports are given from a number of church services and on Wednesdays the next broadcast is planned through a conversation in the radio between laymen on the text for the following Sunday.

- From next month the Swedish Broadcasting System will broadcast a daily morning devotional service at 6 a.m. in addition to the present one a couple of hours later in the day.

- A new Dominican convent has been established in Rögle, near Lund. The twelve nuns in the convent come all from the convent in Montpellier in France.

- The Swedish Bible Society contemplates the opening of a Bible museum in Stockholm which should comprise a couple of thousand of Bible editions.

